

WORKING AFTER A DISASTER

By LACDMH Disaster Services Unit

Disaster Services Unit's final challenge for you in September -- National Emergency Preparedness Month -- is to prepare and plan to work after a disaster. After a disaster, Department of Mental Health's (DMH) Department Operations Center (DOC) and Service Area Command Posts (SACP) will open to coordinate resources to ensure continuity of services and support the County's disaster response efforts. As government employees are all Disaster Services Workers (DSW) and must work following disasters, consider the following:

Pre-Disaster

- **Develop a Family Emergency Plan:** Discuss your emergency plan among family members and friends. For tips to create one, see the e-News story published on September 12, 2013.
- **Develop Emergency Supply Kits:** Create emergency supplies to sustain your family for at least 3 days. Consider emergency supplies for the house and "To-Go" kits for your car and office. For tips, see the e-News story published on September 19, 2013.
- **Map Alternate Routes:** Normal commute routes may be impassable after a disaster. Plan and try alternate routes, avoiding bridges, freeway bypasses or other potential structural barriers, if possible.
- **Identify Alternate Work Location:** If you cannot report to your regular worksite, know your alternate work location (the closest DMH facility to you). Make sure to update this information with Human Resources when you move and inform your supervisor. Map and try different routes to your alternate work location.
- **Know Your Building Emergency Coordinator:** Each DMH facility has a designated Building Emergency Coordinator (BEC) who is responsible for the emergency planning and training of the facility. Proactively engage in any training or planning provided by the BEC as they are only as strong as your support!
- **Know Your Building Emergency Plan:** Every DMH facility has a Building Emergency Plan that is updated annually. Familiarize yourself with the plan and discuss questions and concerns with your supervisors/BEC.

Post-Disaster

- **Ensure Your Family's Safety:** Follow your Family Emergency Plan and access your emergency supply kit. Stay informed about the situation through television, radio, etc.
- **Call DMH Staff Disaster Hotline (1-888-535-4024):** Periodically call this number after a disaster for the Department's status and any available reporting instructions.
- **Report to Work:** Try to contact your supervisor/worksite to inform them of your safety and get reporting instructions. If communication is down, report to work if conditions are safe.
- **Report to Alternate Work Location:** If you cannot report to your regular worksite, report to your alternate work location. Please be patient, because assessing and accounting for current and incoming staff will take time. The primary goal of this phase is to account for DMH staff and determine facilities' status. DMH facilities will communicate information to their SACP, which will relay the information to the DOC.
- **Be Flexible:** After a disaster, you may be requested to assist in activities that you may not normally do day to day. Disaster response and recovery may last for a few days, weeks or months and you may work at the alternate worksite, DOC or disaster sites. For example, clinicians may be requested to provide mental health services at mass care shelter sites or other

disaster sites. Staff with bilingual skills may be requested to provide translation/interpretation services to shelter residents. Tasks will be based on your skills and capabilities. Every job/function you assume will support the well-being of your colleagues, clients and community!

When a disaster strikes, YOU can make a difference!

Secure Your Home -- Help Your Neighbor -- Assist Your Community -- Build Resilience in Our Community

Additional Information

- **Department Operations Center (DOC):** Locations as follow from primary to alternates:
 1. 2nd Floor Conference Room of DMH Headquarters
 2. ACCESS Center
 3. San Fernando Valley Mental Health Clinic

- **Service Area Command Posts (SACP):** Each service area will have a command post which will coordinate the activities of DMH facilities within the area and report to the DOC.

Service Area 1.	Antelope Valley SACP
Service Area 2.	San Fernando SACP; Sub-Command Center -- Santa Clarita
Service Area 3.	Arcadia SACP
Service Area 4.	Hollywood SACP
Service Area 5.	Edelman SACP
Service Area 6.	West Central SACP
Service Area 7.	Rio Hondo SACP
Service Area 8.	Long Beach SACP; Sub-Command Center -- Harbor UCLA

- **Disaster Services Unit (DSU):**

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